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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. STEVENS].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal and living God, our Master and Friend, in the noisy confusion of life, help us to keep our minds on You. Lord, we place ourselves in Your hands as we begin this day. Your plans are better than what we can devise, so lead us with Your providence.

We thank You for this great land and for our many freedoms. Empower our Senators to be faithful in their duties, working with a spirit of unity. May they remember that all things work together for good for those who love You.

Give each of us, Lord, grace to feel the sorrows and trials of others and to bear patiently with human frailties. Give us also confidence in the eternal victory of truth and goodness.

Lord, protect our military.

We pray this in Your glorious name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today there will be a period of morning business until 10 a.m. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the Foreign Operations

appropriations measure. Under the order from last night, Senator DORGAN will be recognized to offer an amendment relating to 9/11 in which there will be 40 minutes of debate. The procedural vote with respect to the Dorgan amendment is therefore expected at approximately 10:45 this morning.

Following that vote, we will begin consideration of the Healthy Forests bill. Senator COCHRAN had hoped, and we tried on several occasions, to reach an understanding that the bill will be open for relevant amendments. We were unable to reach a formal agreement for that, but I do hope we will debate amendments that are related to Healthy Forests and the Healthy Forests initiative. We all recognize the tragedy and the suffering and misery that surrounds the wildfires currently raging in California. I do think it would be unfortunate and irresponsible in many ways for this to be delayed or not to stay on the issues related to the underlying bill. We will have votes throughout today as we make progress on that bill. There is a clear urgency to finish that bill this week.

We will be looking also to execute the order with respect to the climate change bill. That agreement from July 31 allowed for 6 hours of debate. I will be working with principals on both sides of this bill in an effort to begin that debate during today's session.

There are a number of other issues that we are currently working on, including the Internet tax, which has an expiration date surrounding the issue this Friday night. We continue to talk to the interested parties to bring that to some conclusion before Friday. We have the issue of gun liability. We are discussing on both sides of the aisle as to when we might address that—not this week but possibly the following week.

On nominations, a cloture motion had been filed on the nomination of Charles Pickering to be a United States circuit judge for the Fifth Cir-

cuit. That vote will occur on Thursday. Again, we will be working in good faith to finish these measures. I thank everyone for their attention and cooperation in these matters. We do want to finish in a timely fashion and be able to leave for the recess period. There is a lot to accomplish. I think we are on track to do just that.

Mrs. BOXER. Will the leader yield for a quick question about the schedule?

I thank you for your comments about the tragedy in California. I was wondering whether it would be possible, when we take up the Healthy Forests bill, to complete work on that without interruption simply because it would send a signal of hope in terms of how we are going to deal with the communities close to forests. It is a very important piece of legislation.

Would that be possible? Could I get the Senator's commitment on that?

Mr. FRIST. We will certainly consider that and work very hard.

As my colleagues know, we are adjusting the schedule and interrupting the appropriations bills quite appropriately to address this issue, which reflects the joint priority in responding in large part to the immediacy of that response to the fires that are underway.

As I mentioned, the main obligation on both sides of the aisle is to address the issue of the climate change bill and the agreement from July 31. My intention is to stay on Healthy Forests and work aggressively. But we have to ask for cooperation on both sides of the aisle.

I would like to finish Healthy Forests as soon as possible, absolutely finish it this week. It will take focus to stay on that bill and on relevant amendments as we have been requesting.

Mrs. BOXER. If I could make—

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Will the Senator address the Chair, please.

Mrs. BOXER. Through the Chair, I would like to address another question to the leader.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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